

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (previously presented) A method for initiating a communications session involving two or more participants over a telecommunications network, comprising:
 - exchanging messages containing non-repudiable data between said participants to establish at least one trust relationship therebetween relating to the session, said non-repudiable data indicating one or more session control functions, a session control function being a control function to be assumed by an individual participant during the session; and
 - exchanging messages to establish a session description in respect of the communications session; and then
 - establishing the communications session;
 - wherein said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of at least one trust relationship and said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of a session description are exchanged using the same signaling protocol.

2. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the exchanging of messages to establish the at least one trust relationship comprises:
 - defining one or more control functions to be performed by at least one of the participants during the session;
 - communicating the defined control functions to the participants;
 - at each participant:

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Application No. 10/518,897

August 18, 2008

choosing which, if any, of the control functions the participant wishes to assume;

generating a non-repudiable message indicating the chosen control function(s); and

transmitting the generated message to at least one of the other participants.

3. (original) A method according to claim 2, wherein the non-repudiable message comprises: data indicative of the chosen function(s); and at least one digital signature of the participant related to said data.

4. (previously presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein the defining of one or more control functions comprises communicating charging policy data including data indicative of the control functions to a first one of the participants who has requested it from a service provider; and the communicating of the defined control functions further comprises communicating the charging policy data from the first participant to the other participants.

5. (original) A method according to claim 4, wherein at each other participant the generated non-repudiable message is transmitted back to the first participant.

6. (previously presented) A method according to ~~claims 4 or 5~~ claim 4, wherein the first participant assumes those control functions defined within the charging policy which no other participant has chosen to assume.

7. (previously presented) A method for establishing at least one trust relationship between two or more participants and relating to a communications session between said participants over a telecommunications network, said communications session being established by exchanging messages to establish a session description in respect of the communications session prior to establishing the communications session, said method comprising at least one participant performing the following:

requesting session control function data from a server, said data defining one or more control functions to be performed during the communications session;

choosing which, if any, of said control functions to assume;

distributing said control function data to at least one other participant over the telecommunications network; and

receiving a non-repudiable message from the at least one other participant containing non-repudiable data indicating which, if any, of the control functions the at least one other participants has assumed;

wherein said non-repudiable message and said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of a session description are exchanged using the same signaling protocol.

8. (previously presented) A method according to claim 7, wherein said distributing of said control function data further comprises distributing to the at least one other participant non-repudiable data indicating which, if any, of the control functions have been assumed.

9. (previously presented) A method for establishing at least one trust relationship between two or more participants and relating to a communications session between said participants over a telecommunications network, said communications session being established by exchanging messages to establish a session description in respect of the communications session prior to establishing the communications session, said method comprising a server performing the following:

supplying, upon request from a participant, session control function data, said data defining one or more control functions to be performed during the communications session;

receiving non-repudiable data from said participants indicating which, if any, of the control functions each participant has assumed; and

storing said data;

wherein said non-repudiable data and said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of a session description are exchanged using the same signaling protocol.

10. (previously presented) A method according to claim 9, and further comprising:

checking the received non-repudiable data for any conflicts in respect of the assumed control functions between two or more participants; and

resolving any detected conflicts by assigning any control function in respect of which there is a detected conflict to only one of said participants who indicated that they would assume the function.

11. (previously presented) A method according to claim 9, and further comprising: checking the received non-repudiable data to determine which of the control functions have been assumed; and

assigning any control functions which have not been assumed to a first participant, being the participant to which said network control function data was supplied.

12. (previously presented) A method for establishing at least one trust relationship between two or more participants and relating to a communications session between said participants over a telecommunications network, said communications session being established by exchanging messages to establish a session description in respect of the communications session prior to establishing the communications session, said method comprising one or more participants performing the following:

receiving control function data from a first participant over the telecommunications network, said control function data defining one or more control functions to be performed during the communications session;

choosing which, if any, of said control functions to assume;

generating a non-repudiable message containing non-repudiable data indicating which, if any, of the control functions have been assumed; and

sending said message to the first participant;

wherein said non-repudiable message and said message exchanged in respect of the establishment of a session description are exchanged using the same signaling protocol.

13. (original) A method according to claim 12, and further comprising receiving, together with said control function data, non-repudiable data indicating which, if any, of the control functions have been assumed by the first participant.

14. (previously presented) A method according to claim 7, wherein said non-repudiable data comprises data indicative of a control function to be assumed, and a digital signature specific to the participant who has assumed the control function to which said non-repudiable data relates.

15. (previously presented) A method according to claim 7, wherein said non-repudiable data further comprises a nonce value specific to the communications session, and a digital signature specific to the participant who has generated said non-repudiable data relating to the nonce value.

16. (previously presented) A computer program arranged such that when executed by a computer system it causes the computer system to operate according to claim 1.

17. (original) A computer readable storage medium storing a computer program according to claim 16.

18. (previously presented) A system for establishing at least one trust relationship between two or more participants and relating to a communications session between said participants over a communications network, said system comprising processing means arranged to operate according to the method of claim 1.

19. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein said signaling protocol is a session initiated protocol designed for negotiating session features between participants.

20. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 7, wherein said signaling protocol is a session initiated protocol designed for negotiating session features between participants.

21. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein said signaling protocol is a session initiated protocol designed for negotiating session features between participants.

22. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 12, wherein said signaling protocol is a session initiated protocol designed for negotiating session features between participants.

23. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 19, wherein said session initiation protocol is SIP.

24. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 20, wherein said session initiation protocol is SIP.

25. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 21, wherein said session initiation protocol is SIP.

26. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein said session initiation protocol is SIP.

27. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method for initiating a communications session involving two or more participants over a telecommunications network, the method comprising:

exchanging messages containing non-repudiable data between said participants to establish at least one trust relationship therebetween relating to the session, said non-repudiable data indicating one or more session control functions, a session control function being a control function to be assumed by an individual participant during the session; and

exchanging messages to establish a session description in respect of the communications session; then

establishing the communications session;

wherein said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of at least one trust relationship and said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of a session description are exchanged using the same signaling protocol.

28. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method according to claim 27, wherein said exchanging messages to establish the at least one trust relationship comprises:

defining one or more control functions to be performed by at least one of the participants during the session;

communicating the defined control functions to the participants;

at each participant:

choosing which, if any, of the control functions that participant wishes to assume;

generating a non-repudiable message indicating the chosen control function(s); and

transmitting the generated message to at least one other of said participants.

29. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method according to claim 28, wherein the non-repudiable message comprises: data indicative of the chosen control function(s); and at least one digital signature of the participant related to said data.

30. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method according to claim 28, wherein the defining of one or more control functions comprises communicating charging policy data including data indicative of the control functions to a first one of the participants who has requested it from a service provider; and the communicating of the defined control functions further comprises communicating the charging policy data from the first participant to the other participants.

31. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method according to claim 30, wherein at each other participant the generated non-repudiable message is transmitted back to the first participant.

32. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method according to claim 30, wherein the first participant assumes any control functions defined within the charging policy which no other participant has chosen to assume.

• 33. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method according to claim 27, wherein said signaling protocol is a session initiation protocol designed for negotiating session features between participants.

34. (Previously presented) A computer readable storage medium which stores a computer program which enables a computer system to perform a method according to claim 33, wherein said session initiation protocol is SIP.

35. (Previously presented) A system for initiating a communications session involving two or more participants over a telecommunications network, the system comprising:

means for exchanging messages containing non-repudiable data between said participants to establish at least one trust relationship therebetween relating to the session, said non-repudiable data indicating one or more session control functions, a session control function being a control function to be assumed by an individual participant during the session; and

means for exchanging messages to establish a session description in respect of the communications session;

means for establishing the communications session after the messages to establish the session description are exchanged;

wherein said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of at least one trust relationship and said messages exchanged in respect of the establishment of a session description are exchanged using the same signaling protocol.

36. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein the means for exchanging messages to establish the at least one trust relationship comprises:

means for defining one or more control functions to be performed by at least one of the participants during the session;

means for communicating the defined control functions to the participants;

at each participant:

means for choosing which, if any, of the control functions that participant wishes to assume;

means for generating a non-repudiable message indicating the chosen control function(s); and

means for transmitting the generated message to at least one other of said participants.

37. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 36, wherein the non-repudiable message comprises: data indicative of the chosen control function(s); and at least one digital signature of the participant related to said data.

38. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 36, wherein the means for defining one or more control functions comprises means for communicating charging

policy data including data indicative of the control functions to a first one of the participants who has requested it from a service provider; and means for communicating the defined control functions further comprises communicating the charging policy data from the first participant to the other participants.

39. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 38, wherein at each other participant the generated non-repudiable message is transmitted back to the first participant.

40. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 38, wherein the first participant assumes any control functions defined within the charging policy which no other participant has chosen to assume.

41. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein said signaling protocol is a session initiation protocol designed for negotiating session features between participants.

42. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim ~~[[42]]~~41, wherein said session initiation protocol is SIP.